

# BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Leon County, Florida

## Policy No. 98-15

Title: Library Patron Rights & Responsibilities  
 Date Adopted: October 13, 1998  
 Effective Date: October 13, 1998  
 Reference: N/A  
 Policy Superseded: 96-18, "Library Patron Rights and Responsibilities," 11/12/96

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It shall be the policy of the Board of County Commissioners of Leon County, Florida, that Policy No. 96-18, adopted on November 12, 1996, is hereby repealed and superseded, and a new policy adopted in its place, to wit:

Publicly supported library service is based upon the First Amendment right of free expression. Leon County maintains a library environment that is conducive to all users' exercise of their constitutionally protected right to receive information. In order to protect all library users' rights of access to library facilities, to ensure the safety of users and staff, and to protect library resources and facilities from damage, the Board of County Commissioners imposes the following reasonable restrictions on the manner of library access and behavior.

1. Parents or other adults accompanying minor children are responsible for those children in the library. The library is not responsible for unattended children. Parents or other adults accompanying minor children should remain in the library during scheduled library-sponsored childrens programs.
2. Eating and drinking are allowed only in designated areas of the library.
3. **Unacceptable Behaviors in the Library**  
 To ensure everyone's comfort, safety, and access to library resources and facilities, the following behaviors are not considered acceptable in the library:
  - a. noise or talking which disturbs others;
  - b. repetitive breaking of library rules for the use of library spaces, materials, resources, services, facilities or equipment;
  - c. intoxication resulting from the use of alcohol or drugs;
  - d. use of wrong restrooms, or restrooms for bathing;
  - e. soliciting, peddling, or vending, whether in the library or on library grounds, parking areas, or curtilage;
  - f. fighting;
  - g. harassment; and verbal, visual, or physical abuse of other library patrons or library staff;
  - h. use of radios or TVs without headphones;
  - I. improper use, destruction or theft of property;
  - j. running and noisy playing;

- k. possession on library grounds of a weapon, an electric weapon or device, a firearm, a destructive device or explosive as defined in Chapter 790, Florida Statutes. The exceptions are law enforcement officers of the 2nd Judicial Circuit and library security personnel.
  - l. campaigning and petitioning in the library and upon the library entryways.
  - m. sleeping.
4. Patrons who exhibit any of the above unacceptable behaviors will be asked to stop and may be asked to leave the library if the behavior continues. Failure to leave the library when asked to do so will subject the person to possible arrest under Ch. 810.08, Florida Statutes, "Trespass in Structure or Conveyance." Persons whose behavior is disruptive or dangerous may be placed on "Trespass after Warning" notification with the police.
- Library administrative staff may suspend or withdraw library privileges from anyone exhibiting the above behaviors.
5. Patrons engaging in criminal activity as defined by Florida Statutes are reported immediately to law enforcement authorities.
6. Attached to this policy and incorporated herein are "Procedures for Implementing Patron Rights and Responsibilities Policy," as revised and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on October 13, 1998.

## **Library Patron Rights and Responsibilities Policy No. 98-15**

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### **Procedures for Implementing Patron Rights and Responsibilities Policy**

1. Library staff members are responsible for notifying a patron that his or her behavior is unacceptable. Staff at the main library can call the Security Guard to talk with the patron if that level of intervention is warranted. Security Guards are not available at the branches.
2. If, after a first warning, the patron does not cease the unacceptable behavior, he or she may be asked to leave the library for the day. Decisions to ask a patron to leave the library are made by a library supervisor in consultation with the Security Guard, when a Security Guard is available. Library supervisors are members of the library management team or designated staff.

The Tallahassee Police Department (for facilities within the city limits) or Leon County Sheriff's Department (for facilities outside the city limits) is called if a patron refuses to leave the library when asked by staff or Security Guard.

3. The Supervisor of the Day and Security are called immediately at the main library when staff or patrons witness a patron committing an unlawful or dangerous act or threatening such act. The Security Guard and a library supervisor determine if the police are called. At the branches, staff calls the appropriate law enforcement agency immediately.
4. The Security Guard, or staff at a branch, complete a Security Report following incidents in the library. Copies of the report are sent to the Library Director, Assistant Director, and the supervisor involved. The supervisor involved reviews the report, initials it or adds comments or a report of her own, and gives it to the library administrative assistant for copying to the management team.
5. Persons who are given a law enforcement "Trespass after Warning" at the main library should have their picture taken for future reference. The picture, copy of the trespass notice, and identifying information are to be maintained in a notebook at the information desk for use by library staff for purposes of identifying such persons. At the branches, a copy of the trespass notice is kept in the Branch Manager's office.
6. Persons who do not follow policy and procedure when using library services but who are not committing acts which warrant Trespass After Warning as the final activity may be suspended from one or all library services either permanently or for a period of time determined by Library Administration.